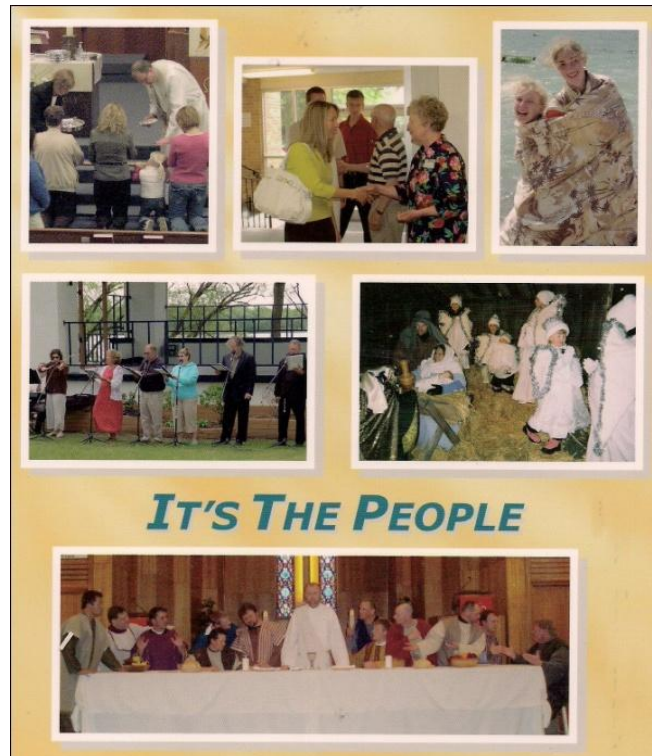


Facility Planning – Needs Assessment

First Lutheran Church



Alexandria, Minnesota
56308

August, 2011

Facility Usage Task Force

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The recommended guidelines and some of the information used throughout this assessment come from a study done by Matthew J. Philaya from Luther Seminary for First Lutheran Church in June 2004. The primary directional material used for the course was *Church Master Planning* (ChMP), a product of *Church Consultants Group – Master Planning*® (August, 1992.)

Executive Summary

The Facility Usage Task Force initially compiled data from earlier studies done at First Lutheran Church. In addition, local and county growth patterns were evaluated. Our current church growth patterns and building space were addressed. The task force conducted a facility walk-through. A Needs Assessment survey on current and future space needs were developed and handed out to church worshippers at all services on a weekend. Interviews with church staff and pastors were conducted. Finally, brainstorming meetings were held with the congregation and results of the Needs Assessment survey were shared as well as other key factors affecting the church.

In the past several years the membership at First Lutheran Church has increased dramatically more than the population growth of Douglas County.

In the past 10 years, First Lutheran Church worship attendance has increased significantly more than the three other ELCA churches in Alexandria, with two of the churches actually showing a decline in attendance.

By adding a Saturday evening worship service and a change in the Sunday worship service times, the Sunday attendance per service is closer to the norm suggested by ChMP as shown on page 4 under 'Worship Space'.

Over the past 10 years, the Sunday school attendance has grown 70.6%. Because of the number of students in Sunday school, we now have two sessions. This presents its own set of problems in dealing with space issues.

Those who are familiar with First Lutheran's location find it easy to locate. Unfortunately, First Lutheran Church can be difficult to find in Alexandria if you are a visitor. It is landlocked in a residential area and not highly visible from any major roadway. Because First Lutheran Church is hidden in the community, word of mouth is important. It seems to be working.

First Lutheran Church is a well established congregation that is experiencing healthy growth in worship attendance, membership and outreach. First Lutheran is made up of a rich variety of people, as far as age, employment and income level, as well as family status (married, single, divorced). Worship life reflects this also with a healthy balance of young families, children and older adults.

Worship Space

Sanctuary main floor seating including aisles	3100 sq. ft.
Balcony seating	663 sq. ft.
Good News Band area	165 sq. ft.
Transept area	165 sq. ft.
Altar area	324 sq. ft.

The current facility has pew seating for 278 on the main floor, 18 in the transept and 45 in the balcony. In 2010, the average service attendance is as follows:

Service	Average Attendance	Percent Capacity	ChMP Optimal Capacity
Saturday 5:30	116	42%	
Sunday 8:30	198	71%	90%
Sunday 9:45	234	84%	80%
Sunday 11:00	157	56%	50%

The capacity seating is based on practical seating. It addresses the question of where it is realistic to expect people to sit in the sanctuary. The balcony and transepts were not included in the practical seating area. The balcony is not typically available for Sunday morning seating because it is often needed by the choir for seating. It is also not easily accessible to those for whom climbing stairs is a problem, which includes many elderly, people in wheel chairs, small children, and parents carrying infants. The right transept (when you face the front) is needed as space for musicians and their equipment. The left transept is not preferable seating for a variety of reasons, which include sight line and the fact that it is so far forward and removed from the rest of the sanctuary.

Per ChMP

- *As a general rule, a worship service should be considered at maximum capacity when the practical seating is at 80 – 90% full.*
- *Chairs are better than pews.*
- *Maximum number of pew rows is suggested to be 14. Then spread out into a semi-circular bowl.*

First Lutheran Church currently holds three worship services in the sanctuary on Sunday morning. According to *ChMP*, most congregations find that they can accommodate up to three Sunday morning services before needing more space.

There is a definite difference in the visual impact of a worship service being “full” and a worship service being “packed”. Naturally, people attending an apparently “packed” worship service (especially newcomers) may look elsewhere the following week.

Adult Education Space

Family Room/Library by west parking lot entrance 1650 sq. ft.

Recommended minimum guidelines per ChMP is 15 sq. ft. per person if you use round tables

Since we use round tables this would mean that the maximum number of people in the room would be around 110. Since part of this room is also the library this number could be reduced by 20%. Subtract another 20% for counters, TV and miscellaneous other equipment in the room, you now are down to about to about 70 people.

Sunday school uses this area on Sunday mornings leaving no room for adult education.

Children Education Space

2010 Statistics

Class	Room Name	Number of Students	Square Footage
3-year old	Noahs Ark	30	421
4-year old	Sunshine Room	31	1600
Kindergarten	100 & 101	34	417
First grade	How Great Thou Art	24	372
Second grade	Kingdomcome	30	432
Third grade	Theatre	38	372
Fourth grade	Fellowship Hall	20	2477
Fifth grade	Youth Room	26	1376
Sixth grade	Youth Room	22	1376

The rule of thumb for classrooms range in size from 10 – 15 square feet per person for senior high to 30 - 35 square feet per person for kindergarten, depending on the age group using the space.

- Because of space issues, two Sunday school classes are held for each age group
- In the past ten years, Sunday school attendance as grown from 150 students to 256 students
- First Lutheran Church has been very resourceful in finding space for various children programs. How to manage this space is often the driving force
- Everything that is planned for children’s ministry and the youth has to be planned with space limitations in mind
- Youth room is being used as two classrooms on Sunday morning so it is unavailable for junior high or senior high
- 7th, 8th and 9th grade confirmation meet at staggered times on Wednesday because of lack of classrooms

Children Education Space - continued

- As First Lutheran Church continues to grow it will be forced to limit programs that are now offered. Eventually growth will drop off if a facility is unable to accommodate this new growth
- Class rooms have little to no storage space
- The church balcony is being used for confirmation small groups
- The pie room, next to the kitchen, is being used for classrooms
- Sunday school opening is being held in the fellowship hall during church services
- The bell tower is also used for the youth
- Nursery is being shared as class rooms and is not available at times as a nursery

Off-street Parking Space

ChMP recommends one parking space for every 2.25 people in attendance.

Number of spaces in parking lot	72
Total people that can park based on 2.25 people per car	162

- Most families now come to church with more than one vehicle. This is especially true for those involved in teaching or choir.

Questions to consider:

- ✓ Is there adequate off-street parking spaced reserved for visitors, elderly and families with young children?
- ✓ Can off-street parking spaces be made available for these people while still respecting the need of designated parking spaces for staff and volunteers who work on Sunday morning?

First Lutheran’s location on generally low-traffic streets is conducive to street parking and provides a short term solution to the issue of parking. However, a full parking lot that forces people to look for street parking can be a deterrent to worship service attendance during cold winter months or during inclement weather.

Off-street parking accounts for a high percentage of Sunday morning parking. If there are 234 people at the 9:45 a.m. worship service, and there is a need for one parking spot for every 2.25 people in attendance, that means that 104 parking spaces are needed just for the people who are in the sanctuary. If there are only 72 parking spaces in the parking lot, then 32 vehicles need to look for off-street parking. If one includes in the combined activity of three worship services and Sunday school, this number increases significantly. This means that at a certain time on Sunday morning, as many as half the people present, if not more, are parking on the street.

Administrative Space

Office area	256 sq. ft.
Copier room	90 sq. ft.
Vault	35 sq. ft.

Per ChMP, recommended office space is 90 square feet per person.
 Per ChMP, recommended work room for assembly is 100 to 150 square feet

Presently two people have desks in the office area. The copier room is at the back of the office which causes a disturbance to the two people working at their desks anytime another staff person needs to use the copiers.

- No space is available for visitors who are waiting to talk to a staff person.

Entrances and Foyer Space

East street entrance in back of sanctuary with coat area	44' x 12'	528 sq. ft.
Hallway north of sanctuary	24' x 15'	360 sq. ft.
West parking lot entrance coat area	25' x 30'	750 sq. ft.
 Total space used		 1638 sq. ft.

It may already be obvious that there is a traffic flow issue when entering and exiting the building on a Sunday morning:

1. When a visitor walks into the church building, it is not very apparent where the sanctuary or the church offices are located with the exception of the east entrance leading into the sanctuary.
2. The east entrance, or the front of the church, is the least used entrance.
3. The east entrance is locked at 4:30 p.m. during the week when the secretaries leave. This leads to confusion at times when people trying to enter from the street for an event find the doors locked.
4. The west entrance, from the parking lot, is the most used entrance.
5. The west entrance area becomes a gathering area and bottleneck for fellowship and coffee following a worship service. Entrance and exit between services on this end of the building is congested.
6. People, wishing to stop and talk, frequently become a barrier for others wishing to pass by, hang up coats or go to the restroom.
7. Space available and necessary for setting up booths and sign-up tables is limited, further crowding the foyer and entry space.
8. The east and west entrance are connected by a hallway, which also serves as a main walkway and a natural gathering area for visiting. Again, causing those wishing to stop and visit to become barriers for others passing by.

Fellowship Space

Adult Education Room by west parking lot entrance 55’ X 30’ 1650 sq. ft.

Lutheran fellowship space is, for all practical purposes, wherever the coffee, doughnuts, and cookies are located on Sunday morning. While Sunday morning fellowship takes place in many forms and in many places, the fellowship area is a very important space. Fellowship in the congregation setting is a tremendous community builder and, although one often does not realize it, a prime place for ‘ministry networking’ to take place. People connect in the church fellowship hall following worship in ways they do not take time to do the rest of the week. ChMP recommends that the fellowship space be large enough to comfortably accommodate 30 to 40% of the people at a worship attendance. Forty percent of the 9:45 a.m. average worship attendance of 234 is 94 people. When you subtract the library area, counter space and miscellaneous storage, you have room for about 70 people. If you add in people arriving through the west entrance to come to 11:00 a.m. worship, the area becomes very congested.

Community Demographic Profile

There is some exciting growth that has been happening in recent years, and the information you will find in community demographics may help you to better understand the direction of that growth.

Population Estimates (Lakes Area Fact Book)

Area	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Douglas County	35,125	35,477	35,827	36,151	36,333

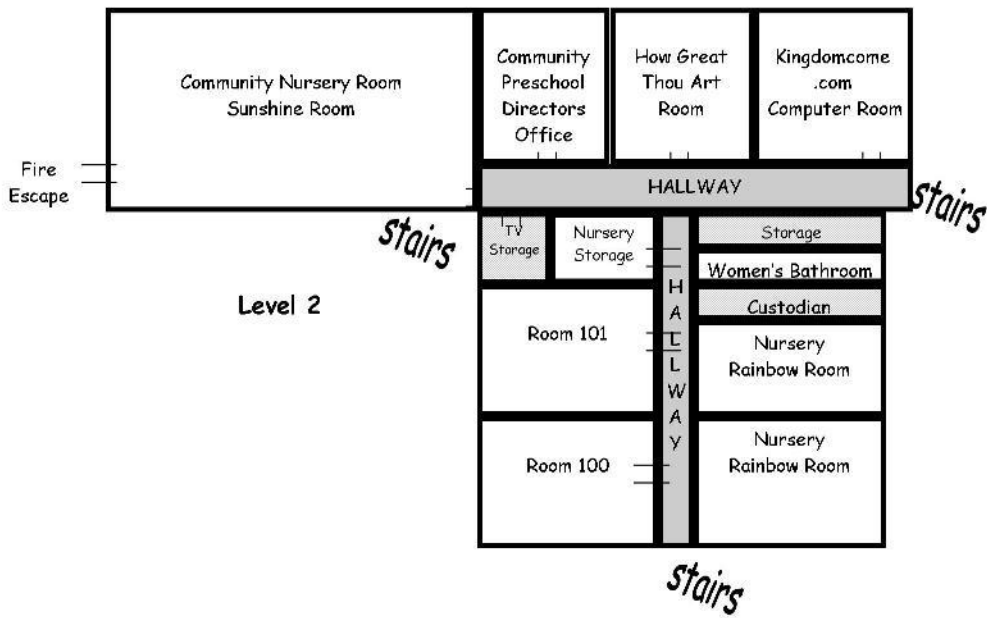
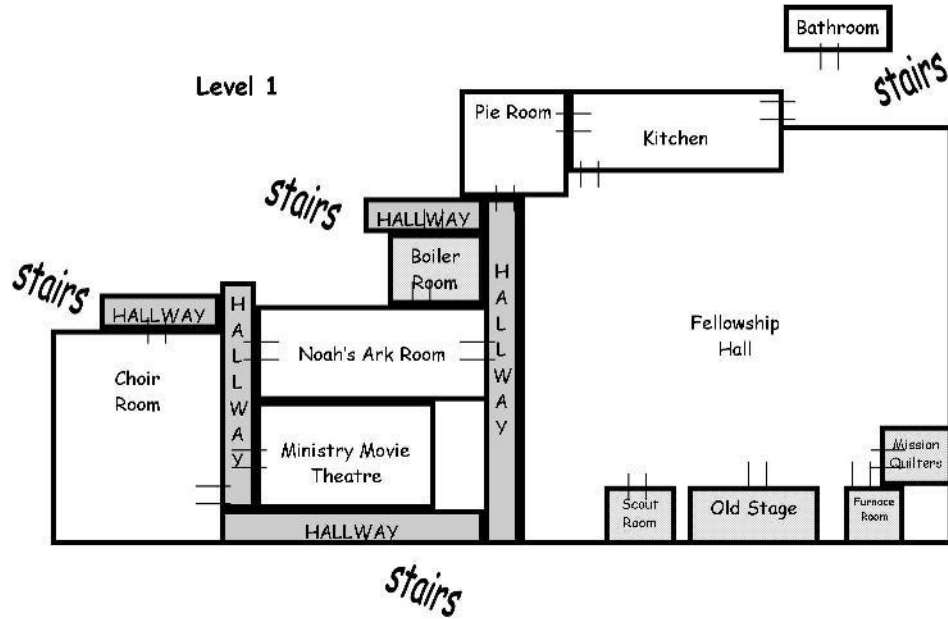
Median Household Income (Lakes Area Fact Book)

Area	2000	2007	2008	2000-2008 % Change
Douglas County	\$39,270	\$44,295	\$48,212	22.8%

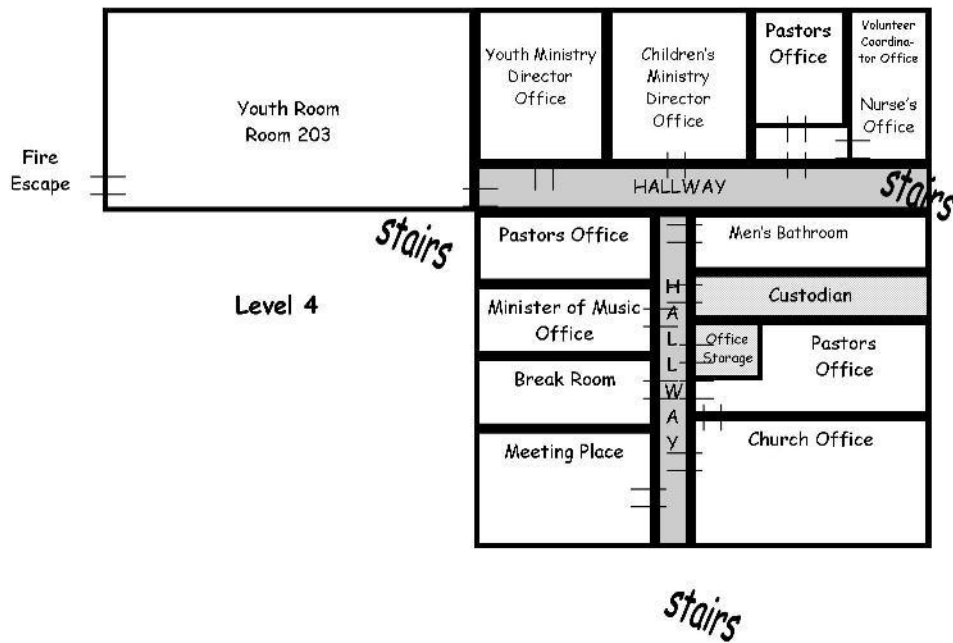
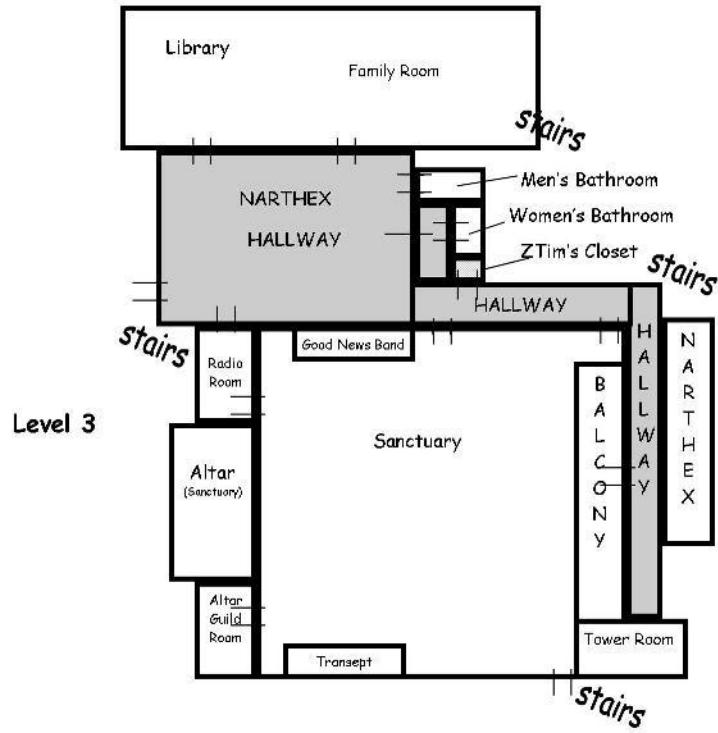
First Lutheran Church (The information in the chart was taken from our year end annual reports)
(Average worship attendance includes Carlos State park)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Baptized members	2293	2206	2317	2414	2468	2557	2629	2668	2712	2720
Average Worship	540	545	564	603	701	710	722	758	760	722
Sunday School	150	160	163	185	202	185	235	248	251	256
New Members	119	98	129	116	88	115	109	102	104	88
Transfers	55	31	11	14	12	22	22	36	26	70

Present Building



Present Building – continued.



Needs Assessment Survey Results											
June 18/19 2011											
										City	
						Totals	Sat	8:30	9:45	Park	
#1	First Lutheran Church is easy to find in Alexandria					Agree	240	49	61	93	37
						Disagree	32	9	9	8	6
#2	The church building is inviting and welcoming to everyone					Agree	249	53	57	97	42
						Disagree	22	5	10	5	2
#3	It is easy to find your way around in the church					Agree	193	42	50	74	27
						Disagree	65	14	17	17	17
#4	The sanctuary has enough space to meet our worship service needs now and in the future					Agree	106	21	24	46	15
						Disagree	147	33	41	49	24
#5	There is adequate space to meet our needs for classrooms, meetings, and fellowship now and in the future					Agree	69	14	10	34	11
						Disagree	159	30	51	50	28
#6	First Lutheran Church has enough parking spaces to meet our present and future needs					Agree	45	13	8	16	8
						Disagree	223	45	59	83	36
#7	We need more outside recreational space					Agree	177	42	45	61	29
						Disagree	64	11	19	24	10
#8	Our church is fully handicapped accessible					Agree	111	21	28	46	16
						Disagree	132	33	39	35	25
#9	Our restrooms are adequate and large enough					Agree	174	38	43	67	26
						Disagree	92	17	24	33	18
#10	Our narthex (entrance hall into the church) is large enough					Agree	100	22	26	38	14
						Disagree	166	35	43	59	29
#11	A new building would attract new people to the church					Agree	164	39	37	63	25
						Disagree	85	12	26	35	12
#12	A new building program will unify people behind a significant challenge					Agree	135	30	36	48	21
						Disagree	88	14	22	37	15
#13	A new building would allow us to take on new ministries within the church and within the community					Agree	175	40	42	65	28
						Disagree	67	12	18	25	12

Staff Interview Summaries**How does the church's present facility fill its ministry?**

- We reach out well to community and member needs
- We are more active than many churches in the area
- We have warm traditional features in the sanctuary
- Sanctuary seats worshippers comfortably at "regular" worship service presently
- All offices on the same level help with coordination of activities
- It has enabled us to do what we do
- All rooms are being used for multiple classes
- Church is being used to maximum potential
- A change of church service times has balanced out worship attendance
- Children ministry rooms are very creative
- Choir room is multi-level with good acoustics
- Pianos/keyboards/organs are all excellent quality
- Radio broadcast is meeting needs of shut-ins

How is the church's present facility a hindrance to our ministry?

- We are short of space in all areas; storage, meeting room, classrooms, parking and music area
- Coming in the west door is not welcoming to people. People get lost as to where to go
- Not enough gathering space before and after worship
- Building is too dark
- No handicap accessibility to classrooms and offices
- Scheduling can only go so far
- The church present facility will never allow us to grow beyond a 750 average worship attendance
- Wednesday scheduling has become a critical issue with confirmation and the different music groups meeting.
- Nursery is being shared as classrooms and is not available at times as a nursery
- Outside groups such as Sweet Adelines have been turned away because we had no space available for them to practice
- Four areas of entry/exit are both a positive and a negative
- Too many stairs
- Limited outdoor space for children to play/picnic
- No visible nursery for parents
- Too many doors for security
- Building is a fire hazard
- We do not have an adequate copy and assembly room
- Present location is not "visible" to the community
- Sound quality is a concern

Staff Interview Summaries – continued**How is the church's present facility a hindrance to our ministry? - continued**

- Quilters need more space
- We need to think broader than just for today
- Choir is constantly struggling for space. Unable to hang up choir robes after a service because the choir room is being used as a class room
- We are unable to offer an adult study on Sunday morning.
- Dining area is too small for many events
- Library is not utilized
- Programming is altered and sometimes eliminated due to lack of space
- Many programs have to be offered on less than ideal days/times due to space limitations
- New people have no idea where to go when they enter the building and this is their first impression of the church
- Confirmation times need to be staggered for 7, 8 and 9th graders
- Too many youth in Confirmation small group discussions because of lack of classrooms

How will it become more of a hindrance going forward?

- Space issues will continue to get worse
- Numbers of students and adults will drop
- Maintenance costs will increase as the building gets older
- Difficult to offer congregational events because of lack of space
- It will be hard to grow our ministry and programming, if we don't have classroom space or meeting space to do it in
- It will be difficult to keep up with technology and keep the younger generations interested in our programming if we don't have the facility that readily accepts all the necessary, high-tech electronics and technology
- It will be difficult to minister to our elderly, if they can't physically get to the program because of stairs
- With continued growth, people will be turned away due to overcrowding, lack of space for meetings or activities and lack of seating when activities are scheduled
- Staffs spends more time and energy trying to be creative about how to use our space and are not able to focus time and energy on new ideas for ministry, in the future, that will attract new people and keep current members excited and energized

Staff Interview Summaries – continued**Identify specific areas that need to be addressed.**

- Roof repairs
- Parking lot repairs
- Carpet replacement
- Need more gathering space
- Church should be equipped with modern/high tech technology
- Should have everything on one level for easy access
- We need a better hospitality area
- Need to be more energy efficient
- Need indoor recreation facilities
- With a new facility we would become a central leader in the community in everything we could offer
- New facilities would entice younger families and people
- We can't sit idly by in our comfort zone. Scriptures say that you either grow or go backwards
- We need more daylight in church
- Entry area needs to be almost as big as the sanctuary
- The church building can be friendly and inviting without people being around to greet
- Sanctuary should be able to seat 600 to 800 people
- We need more garage space for storage as well as parking vehicles and equipment
- More coat space is needed
- Hallways are congested on Sundays that the Welcome Center is lost in the crowd
- Easier access to offices
- Central air conditioning
- Better traffic flow within the church
- A larger chancel area
- Choir should be up front in church
- Live video-streaming would benefit shut-ins and travelers
- Contemporary worship needs a dedicated performance area
- Chapel space with a more private, intimate space to pray, meditate and to hold small weddings
- Laundry facilities
- Art and craft storage space
- Preschool space separate from Children's Ministry
- Convenient bathroom locations on the same level and near high traffic areas such as cloakrooms
- Exterior landscaping wishes for; walking paths, courtyard, labyrinth, gazing ball, fire pit, etc.
- Sloping floor in sanctuary

Staff Interview Summaries – continued**Identify specific areas that need to be addressed. - continued**

- Cross and stained glass as a continued focal point of the altar area
- Gymnasium with showers, lockers, and sleeping facilities for overnight guests or retreats
- Transportation of elderly, etc. and Sunday morning pickups
- Drop off driveway for elderly and handicapped that is covered
- Camera and video monitored exterior entrance with latch release capability in office
- Interior main office doors would have motion detected bells that would notify staff when people enter the office
- Panic button for the secretary to use in emergencies
- Copy room large enough for all supplies, the main digital copier, and a RISOGRAPH with color capabilities; accessible both from the main office and the interior hallway for other staff and Community Nursery School
- Main office configuration would use a counter or other such means to define the public space including the reception area
- Reception area would have two love seat/couches or comfy chairs with end tables, lamps, etc. to give it a welcoming homey feel for our guests
- Computer room with server and network connections locked and accessible only to administrator and office staff
- Network printers, fax machine, scanner, typewriter, etc, available to staff but not necessarily in the main office
- Headphones for receptionist use
- Two secretary work stations with space for a third secretarial staff position
- Table/work area for volunteers working on mailings, etc. with waist high counters
- Walk in vault: all shelving and storage space accessible without the use of a ladder

Congregation Forums

July 31, 2011

Attendance: After 8:30 - 55 people; after 9:45 - 37 people

Began with brief description of the task force's purpose. Named committee members.

Presenter discussed use of data from earlier studies, consideration of church's and county growth, comprehensive tour of the current facilities, interviews with pastors and staff, conducted survey of worshippers.

Suggestions/Questions/Comments

- Has an analysis of church membership by age demographics been prepared?
- Individual stated he understood we wouldn't necessarily build for current needs but look ahead for future needs
- Congestion in parking lot between services big problem
- When parking lot is full, visitors may not attend worship and move on to somewhere else
- Has the purchase of additional property adjacent to the church been considered?
Several comments that this was not a good option.
- Changes to the current building would mean bringing structure in compliance with current building codes
- With the potential costs of a new high school in the community, how would this affect new construction for FLC?
- Current building costs and interest rates are lower than possibly a few years from now
- Is there an ongoing building fund established? Should we have envelopes designated for building? Is there money in the bank specifically designated for building? Start saving now.
- Does ELCA have a revolving loan fund for member churches?
- This congregation was instrumental in Shalom and Bethesda's start up. Should this option be considered now?
 - Pastor John comments: This has been considered. More recent trends show that generally it is the bigger churches, which offer more in ministry and programs, that are showing growth. While smaller churches are more likely to be declining in recent years.

Congregation Forums - continued

- Attendees in second group were challenged:
 - The adult ministry committee has considered starting an adult Sunday school at another location because there is not enough space in the current building. How many would be interested in attending? No one responded.
- Has any outside interest been shown in purchasing the FLC facilities?
- What's the time frame? (None established yet; Vision Team will receive the task force's report at their next meeting.)
 - Pastor John assured the group there will be plenty of discussion with the congregation in this process.
- Some years ago, the church considered changing the entrance to the rear with the Fellowship/Family room serving as a gathering space but abandoned idea because of high costs.
- Stories shared:
 - Their previous church in another community hadn't been doing a great job with their stewardship. But when they decided to step out and build a new church, the people responded.
 - From a newer member -
 - Their experience also was that the people responded financially when a new building was constructed and later as additions were made to that church.
 - The sign on the new property was the factor that brought this person to FLC
- With Knute Nelson's project and the possibility of a new high school, that additional growth will attract more people to the community and will be beneficial in bringing more visibility to FLC at that new location.
- Many people following the meetings expressed their sincere thanks that this information was shared and greatly desired to be apprised of progress and included in future decisions.

Congregation Forums - continued**August 14, 2011**

Attendance: After 8:30 – 30 people; after 9:45 – 20 people

Began with a brief description of the task force's purpose. Discussed data from earlier studies and highlighted some points on the survey.

Suggestions/Questions/Comments

- Can money be borrowed from the ELCA?
- How much will a new church cost? Any good estimates of costs.
- Individual expressed concern over volatility in market and in current difficult economic times. Is this the right time to build?
- Individual commented on the problems with our kitchen - water heater too small, sewer issues.
- How effective is our current building security?
- How many acres of land at new site?
- In a new building, we need large gathering area, adequate parking, Sunday school wing, chapel.
- Do we have a timeline in place? When will we secure architects?
- We need to provide adequate and good space for our young people. They are the future of the church.
- Is a preschool being considered in the new building?
- Have promises toward land been met? What is the status in paying off the land?
- Facilities and space not adequate for the needs of our young people or for us to respond to needs of our community.
- What will become of our current facility if we build? Suggest we dream and brainstorm how current facility can continue to be used to serve community needs and expand ministry we currently don't have space for.
- We need a financial feasibility study to determine what we can confidently afford so programs and ministry don't suffer because of financial stress.
- How is the new land location zoned?
- With all the people needed on committees to go forward with a building, use an application process to determine where people's talents can best be used.

Quick Financial Estimate

If a church wants to get a quick idea of how much it can afford to spend on its project, it can do the following simple calculations:

Step 1:	\$ 90,000.00	Amount in hand (building fund)
Step 2:	\$ 780,474.00	Church’s annual operating budget
Step 3:	\$1,756,066.00	Step 2 figure times 1.5 – 3.0 (Choose a number between 1.5 and 3.0 depending on how successful you believe your fund raising campaign will be.) (2.25)
Step 4:	\$3,512,133.00	Step 3 figure times 2 (This is amount to be financed)
Step 5:	\$1,500,000.00	Amount expected from sale of existing property.
Step 6:	\$6,858,195.00	Total figures in Step 1, 3, 4, and 5 = Amount Available
Step 7:	\$1,028,729.00	Step 6 figure times .15 = Project Contingency
Step 8:	\$5,829,466.00	Step 6 figure minus Step 7 figure = Maximum Price

The Maximum Price is the figure that your architect/builder must not go above when pricing the project. The amount set aside for the project contingencies will cover unanticipated expenses (e.g. change orders, increased cost of material, etc.)

Note: *The above should only serve as an initial snapshot estimate.*

- This Quick Financial Estimate is provided by Construction Connection, a ministry of the Church Development Ministry Team. July 9, 2007, North Indiana Conference UMC

Review List of Options

Based on findings, the following options were discussed in terms of 'Pros' and 'Cons':

1) **Do nothing:**

Pros – None

Cons – Would continue to freeze any needed staff hiring
Loss of needed programs/services
Loss of current and new parishioners
Limited in ability to meet needs of the community

2) **Do something later:**

Pros – Have a master plan in place in advance
Acknowledge current economic conditions

Cons – Run risk of 'later never comes'
Continue to put off the inevitable
Can't increase needed programs
Higher construction costs
Higher maintenance issues

3) **Utilize current space more effectively and efficiently:**

Pros – Avoiding cost of a new building while trying to continue our ministries

Cons – Reduces flexibility in space utilization
Masks the need for more space
This was done in 2004 and limited space modifications remain
Building maintenance costs will continue to increase

4) **Use off-site facilities for offices:**

Pros – Get immediate short term relief
Open up rooms for Sunday school use
Depending on location, this off-site facility could give First Lutheran more recognition in the community

Cons – Loss of staff interaction unless entire staff is moved off-site
Staff not available to visitors to the church
Costs will be incurred for rent of off-site facility

5) **Remodel current space in fellowship hall and family room**

Pros – No impact to overall footprint
Less expensive and more timely than a building addition
Configure space so they are more multifunctional

Cons – Temporary loss of space while under modification
This is just a temporary solution; it does not fix the problem of space
This will reduce space in fellowship hall and family room
A cost will still be incurred

Review List of Options - continued**6) Use on-site trailers:**

Pros – Instantly availability of additional space

Spur need for additional action

Cons – Loss of parking space

Ugly

Safety and security concerns

Waste of capital

Isolation

City zoning particulars

Seasonal issues

7) Build new facility:

Pros – Can be designed to meet our needs

Increase community/collaborative opportunities

Some debt is good

Potential income generated from present location

Allows for growth

Creates a stronger operational management for the church

Allows us to expand our ministries

Stewardship – better meets needs of community

Cons – We need a building plan

Incurring debt

Larger space increases operational costs

Loss of original location of First Lutheran Church

Consensus on Options

After in-depth discussion of the options, a consensus was reached by the task force showing the following:

- Options 1 & 2 were not considered viable, if we are to continue growing
- Options 3 is very short term
- Options 4, 5 & 6 are again stop gaps but could extend use of present facility
- Option 7 would seem to be the best option, if the church wants to continue to grow in membership, new programs and outreach options

Analysis

First Lutheran's current facility has served it well over the past 60 years, but because of limited parking, fellowship, education, and at times limited worship space, it is likely that we cannot sustain our current rate of growth without a change.

Over the last ten years, schedules have been adjusted for classes and groups, and rooms have been shared in an attempt to maximize our ability to use available space. There is however a limit to what is feasible, safe and what we can offer confidently to fulfill our mission. As a result certain types of programming cannot be offered due to lack of space.

The Needs Assessment has identified several current space inadequacies. Our needs, as well as inadequacies, will only increase as the church continues to grow. What may currently be sporadic inadequacies may become permanent inadequacies and result in the loss of membership, without some form of intervention/relief. Over time, chronic inadequacies become more entrenched in the psyche of the church, and more costly and difficult to eradicate.

Specific Recommendation

In light of this study, and based on numerous interviews, and the gathering of information and statistics regarding First Lutheran's present facilities and future needs, the Facility Needs Task Force recommends that First Lutheran Church begin the process of visioning, and developing an action plan to build a new facility. It is our belief that options 1-6 which are listed in this final report only postpone the inevitable and suggest that we are content to plateau in regard to our ability to grow and expand our mission and ministry. To make this possibility a reality we as a congregation would need to:

- Form a Steering Committee that will coordinate and provide leadership in the areas of planning, implementation and communication.
- Secure a professional fundraising firm that is experienced in working with churches. Such a firm would help develop a feasibility study, and identify what First Lutheran's potential is in moving ahead with a building project.
- Secure an architectural firm to help develop a plan in cooperation with congregational leadership, as well as congregational input.
- Translate the church's vision for ministry into a building design that will lead us into the future and expand the possibilities and effectiveness of First Lutheran's mission.